

Amendments to the Claims:

Please cancel Claims 9 through 12 and 17 without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein.

Please amend Claims 1 through 8, 13 through 16, and 18 to read, as follows.

1. **(Currently Amended)** An electrophotographic image forming system for forming an electrostatic latent image by applying an AC voltage to a charger contacting an image carrier and thereby charging a [[the]] surface of the image carrier, comprising:

a detector for detecting an AC charge current by applying the AC voltage to the charger in either a non-discharge region or a discharge region;

a detection characteristic switching unit adapted to switch for switching current detection characteristics of said detector between a time when said detector detects an AC charge current in the non-discharge region and discharge region a time when said detector detects an detecting AC charge current in the discharge region; and by applying a particular AC voltage to the charger;

a detector for detecting AC charge current in either the switched non-discharge region or discharge region; and

an AC voltage decision unit for deciding an AC charge voltage to be applied to the charger during image formation based on a [[the]] detected AC charge current in the non-discharge region and a detected AC charge current in the discharge region. current:

2. **(Currently Amended)** The system as set forth in claim 1, wherein a [[the]] current detection characteristic of a detected AC charge current is switched between a

[[the]] case where an AC voltage no higher [[more]] than a discharge threshold voltage is applied and a [[the]] case where an AC voltage no lower [[less]] than the discharge threshold voltage is applied.

3. (Currently Amended) The system as set forth in claim 1, wherein, with a [[the]] discharge threshold voltage being a [[the]] voltage for initiating a discharge to the image carrier when the DC voltage is applied to the charger, a [[the]] current running when at least one AC voltage, which are voltage no higher [[more]] than the discharge threshold voltage, voltage is applied to the charger and a [[the]] current running when at least two AC voltages, which is voltages no lower [[less]] than the discharge threshold voltage, voltage are applied thereto are detected during non-image formation.

4. (Currently Amended) The system as set forth in claim 1, wherein said [[the]] detector detects a [[the]] mean value of a [[the]] half-wave current of the detected AC charge current.

5. (Currently Amended) An electrophotographic image forming system for forming an electrostatic latent image by applying an AC voltage to a charger contacting an image carrier and thereby charging a [[the]] surface of the image carrier, comprising:
a first detector that applies a particular AC voltage to the charger and detects an AC charge current in a [[the]] non-discharge region;

a second detector that has a current detection characteristic different from a current detection characteristic [[that]] of said [[the]] first detector and detects an AC charge current in a [[the]] discharge region; and

an AC voltage decision unit that decides an AC charge voltage to be applied to the charger during image formation based on the detection results of said [[the]] first detector and said [[the]] second detector.

6. (Currently Amended) The system as set forth in claim 5, wherein the AC charge voltage is determined from the detection results of said [[the]] first detector when an AC voltage no higher [[more]] than a discharge threshold voltage is applied and of said [[the]] second detector when an AC voltage no lower [[less]] than the discharge threshold voltage is applied.

7. (Currently Amended) The system as set forth in claim 5, wherein, with a [[the]] discharge threshold voltage being a [[the]] voltage for initiating discharge to the image carrier when the DC voltage is applied to said [[the]] charger, a [[the]] current running when at least one AC voltage, which is ~~voltage~~ no higher [[more]] than the discharge threshold voltage is applied to said [[the]] charger and the current running when at least two AC voltages, which are ~~voltages~~ no lower [[less]] than the discharge threshold voltage, voltage are applied thereto are detected during non-image formation.

8. **(Currently Amended)** The system as set forth in claim 5, wherein said [[the]] detector detects a [[the]] mean value of a [[the]] half-wave current of the AC charge current.

9. **(Canceled)**

10. **(Canceled)**

11. **(Canceled)**

12. **(Canceled)**

13. **(Currently Amended)** An electrophotographic image forming method of forming an electrostatic latent image by applying AC voltage to a charger contacting an image carrier and thereby charging the surface of the image carrier, comprising:

a first detection step of applying a particular AC voltage to the charger and detecting an AC charge current in a [[the]] non-discharge region;

a second detection step of detecting an AC charge current in a [[the]] discharge region using a current detection characteristic different from a current detection characteristic used in that of the first detection step;

a decision step of deciding an AC charge voltage to be applied to the charger during image formation based on the detection results obtained in the first detection step steps and the second detection step; and

a control step of controlling the decided AC charge voltage to be applied to the charger during image formation.

14. **(Currently Amended)** The method as set forth in claim 13, wherein the AC charge voltage is determined from the detection results obtained in the first detection step when an AC voltage, which is voltage no higher [[more]] than a discharge threshold voltage is applied and in the second detection step when an AC voltage, which is voltage no lower [[less]] than the discharge threshold voltage is applied.

15. **(Currently Amended)** The method as set forth in claim 13, wherein, with a [[the]] discharge threshold voltage being a [[the]] voltage for initiating discharge to the image carrier when DC voltage is applied to the charger, a [[the]] current running when at least one AC voltage, which is voltage no higher [[more]] than the discharge threshold voltage is applied to the charger and the current running when at least two AC voltages, which are voltages no lower [[less]] than the discharge threshold voltage are applied thereto are detected during non-image formation.

16. **(Currently Amended)** The method as set forth in claim 13, wherein a [[the]] mean value of a [[the]] half-wave current of the AC charge current is detected.

17. **(Canceled)**

18. (Currently Amended) A storage medium for storing a computer program for controlling electrophotographic image formation that forms an electrostatic latent image by applying AC voltage to a charger contacting an image carrier and thereby charging the surface of the image carrier, wherein the computer program causes a computer to execute:

[[to:]]

a first detection step of detecting an AC charge current in a non-discharge region;
~~apply a particular AC voltage to the charger to detect AC charge current;~~
a second detection step of detecting an detect the AC charge current running in
[[the]] a discharge region using charger under a current detection characteristic different
from a current detection characteristic of the first detection step; characteristic;
a decision step of deciding an decide AC charge voltage to be applied to the charger
during image formation based on the detection results obtained AC charge current detected
in [[the]] the first detection step and said second detection step; non-discharge region or
discharge region; and
a control step of controlling control the decided AC charge voltage to be applied to
the charger during image formation.